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FIGS. 4A and 4B are side views of the protective case and the portable computer showing a manner of coupling the portable computer to the protective case. The inside of connecting member 56 of protective case 50 contacts the outside of hinge portion 26 of portable computer 20. By the insertion of hinge portion 26 into inside of connecting member 56 equipped with elastic member 58, the elastic force of elastic member 58 causes connecting member 56 to hold portable computer 20 tightly. When the insertion is completed, portable computer 20 is fully contained in protective case 50, and then band 60 is latched. In this manner, the portable computer 20 is easily combined with protective case 50.

FIGS. 5A, 5B, and 5C show a first embodiment of protective case 50. Elastic member 58 is attached to outside of connecting member 56. Upper plate 71 contacts the upper side of connecting member, and lower plate 72 contacts the lower side of connecting member while bending portion 73 contacts the central portion of connecting member 56. Hinge cover 59 is attached to the outside of connecting member 56 to cover elastic member 58 by using an adhesive or a thread as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. Thus, elastic member 58 is hidden by hinge cover 59 and cannot be seen.

FIGS. 6A, 6B, and 6C show a second embodiment of protective case 50. A receptacle 158 is formed on connecting member 56 to accommodate elastic member 58. The thickness of connecting member 56 is the same as the summation of the thickness of elastic member 58 and the thickness of the portion of connecting member on which receptacle 158 is formed. Hinge cover 59 is attached to the outside of connecting member 56 to cover elastic member 58 by using an adhesive or a thread as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. Thus, elastic member and receptacle 158 are hidden by hinge cover 59 cannot be seen.

FIGS. 7A, 7B, and 7C show a third embodiment of protective case 50. A receptacle 159 is formed on connecting member 56 to accommodate elastic member 58 and hinge cover 59. The thickness of connecting member 56 may be made the same as the summation of the thickness of elastic member 58, the thickness of the portion of connecting member on which receptacle 158 is formed, and the thickness of the hinge cover. Hinge cover 59 is attached to receptacle 159 of connecting member 56 to cover elastic member 58 and receptacle 159 by using an adhesive or a thread as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. Thus, elastic member 58 and receptacle 159 hidden by hinge cover 59 cannot be seen.

In another embodiment, hinge cover 59 is formed from an outer surface of connecting member 56 by cutting hinge cover 59 off a detaching portion of connecting member 56. One end of hinge cover 59 is not cut off from connecting member 56 while the other ends are taken off from and detached from the detaching portion of connecting member 56. After elastic member 58 is inserted between hinge cover 59 and connecting member 56 through the other ends, hinge cover 59 is attached to the detaching portion of connecting member 56 to cover detaching portion and elastic member 58.

Referring now to FIG. 8, a hand held computer 200 includes a top housing 230, a base housing 232, and connecting housing 226 joining top housing 230 and base housing 232. Various functions of switches for operating hand held computer 200 are located on a switch or key section 243 of palm top computer 200. Top housing 230 includes a monitor screen 235 and keys or switches 241 located on switch section 243 of computer 200 and may have a non-switch or non-key section 242 on which switches 241

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are not located. Connecting housing 226 and base housing 232 may have switch section 243 and non-switch section 242.

Since hand held computer 200 does not include any hinge comparable to portion 26 of portable computer 20 shown in FIG. 2, elastic member 258 is inserted into or attached to the area of connecting member 256 or receptacle 269 formed on connecting member 256 corresponding to non-switch section 242 of hand held computer 200, and then connecting cover 259 is attached to connecting member 256 to cover elastic member 258 and receptacle 269 of protective cover 250. A top cover 252 covers top housing 230, and a base cover 254 covers base housing 232 while connecting housing 226 is inserted into connecting member 256. Elastic member 258 causes connecting member 256 to hold non-switch section 242 of hand held computer 200 through connecting member 256. In order words, neither elastic member 58 nor hinge cover 59 depress any of the keys or switches 241 when the cover is closed. A button 261 formed on a band 260 is latched into button hole 262 of protective cover 250. A non-flexible plate may attached to the inside of flexible and soft top cover 252 to cover and further protect monitor screen 235. In order to connecting member 256 to tightly hold non-key portion 242 and avoiding slipping to clip off and being uncovered in a closed position, a first diametric dimension of non-key portion 242 is bigger than a second diametric dimension of elastic member 258 while in a rest position and while not embracing non-key portion 242. The protective case 250 is uncovered from portable computer 200 by being slipped to clip off from non-key portion 242 when a user use portable computer 20. In another embodiment, user may use the computer 200 during uncovering only a second leaf 252 from top case 230 without clipping off elastic member 258 or slipping elastic member from computer 200.

As described above, according to the principles of the present invention, it is very convenience for an user to carry the portable computer covered by a relatively flexible, small, light protective case and to easily detach the protective cover from the portable computer, since the protective cover is not bulky in size and includes a top cover, a base cover, and a connecting member which are made of flexible, small, light material such as leather. Moreover, it provides a protective cover with a low production cost, a light weight and flexible cover since only a non-switch section or a hinge portion of the computer is inserted into the connecting member having the elastic member which is not a soft portion of protective cover.

This invention has been described using exemplary preferred embodiments. However, it is to be understood that the scope of the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments. On the contrary, it is intended to cover various modifications and similar arrangements. The scope of the claims, therefore, should be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and similar arrangements.

What is claimed is:

1. A protective case for a portable computer, comprising:
  - a) said portable computer including a base housing, a hinge formed on said base housing, and a top housing containing a display screen and having one end rotatably coupled to said hinge of said base housing;
  - b) a cover comprised of a first leaf joined by a bendable connecting member to a second leaf, said first and said second leaf spaced apart from each other and covering an outer surface of said base housing and an outer